

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 350

By Faulkner

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize Reverend Lynn Gale Lyon upon his selection as 2005 National Chaplain of the Year.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that this legislative body should honor those individuals who have answered a divine call to the ministry and who have served with dedication, vigor, and enthusiasm to perform God's work for their congregations and their communities; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Lynn Gale Lyon is one such stalwart servant of the Lord who has a rich history as a Baptist pastor; he faithfully serves as Co-Coordinator of the Volunteer Chaplains Corps with the Knox County Sheriff's office and as Co-Pastor of Shepherd of the Hills Baptist Church in Powell with his son, Lee Lyon; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Lyon's outstanding work as a Chaplain was recognized in 2005 by the National Sheriffs' Association at their sixty-fifth annual conference and exhibition in Louisville, Kentucky; at the convention, Reverend Lyon was cited as the 2005 Chaplain of the Year by the association; and

WHEREAS, as Co-Coordinator of the Volunteer Chaplains Corps, Gale Lyon works to ensure that a volunteer chaplain is available twenty-four hours a day to assist officers at crime and accident scenes and to provide counseling to sheriffs' office staff when the need arises; and

WHEREAS, Chaplain Lyon has overseen seven Chaplain Corp Academies, assisting with the training of more than ninety chaplains for ten different law enforcement agencies in the area; and

WHEREAS, a native of Johnson City, he was born on May 8, 1937, and became a follower of Christ in 1957 at the age of nineteen; and

WHEREAS, on October 19, 1957, he was joined in holy matrimony with his high school sweetheart, Virginia Ruth Fagan, and the blessed union produced four sons, Bernie, Leland “Lee”, Tony, and Keith; and

WHEREAS, a 1956 graduate of Science Hill High School, Reverend Lyon attended East Tennessee State College in Johnson City from 1964 until 1965 and Carson-Newman College from 1965 until 1966; he went on to earn additional college credit from Southern and Southwestern Seminaries; and

WHEREAS, an avid scholar, he has attended numerous seminars on Sunday school, church training, Vacation Bible School, and pastor leadership programs on the state and local levels; he has also attended special ministry seminars in BSU work, disaster relief, special friends, and rural church work; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Lyon has also facilitated and attended evangelism seminars that discuss topics such as evangelism in the local church by the Home Mission Board, evangelism explosion, and lay evangelism and WIN, of which Reverend Lyon is a certified teacher; and

WHEREAS, called to ministry at the age of twenty-four in 1963, Gale Lyon assumed his first pastorate in 1964 at Flag Pond Baptist Church in Flag Pond, where he remained until 1965; during his pastorate at Flag Pond, he was enrolled as a part-time student and was also privileged to have the opportunity to preach in the Layman’s Crusade in Fontana, California; and

WHEREAS, from 1965 until 1967, he served in his second pastorate, working for three years at Little Mountain Baptist Church in Roan Mountain as pastor and as President of the Watauga Association of Pastors for two of the three years, leading in baptisms and additions; during this time, he initiated a mission project that later grew into Roan Park Baptist Church, served in the Sunday school department, and gave of his time to assist in Vacation Bible School; and

WHEREAS, in the position of President of the Watauga Association of Pastors, Reverend Lyon was selected to attend the Rural Church Conference in Mississippi that was sponsored by the Home Mission Board; and

WHEREAS, in November of 1967, the Lord called Gale Lyon to Trinity Baptist Church in Bedford, Virginia, where he served as head pastor until 1974; Reverend Lyon felt God’s

blessing upon him during this time, as the church averaged fifty additions to its membership per year, relocated to a comfortable subdivision, purchased a new pastorium, and constructed a \$200,000 church building on the purchased property; and

WHEREAS, during his time at Trinity Baptist, Gale Lyon served thirty days on the mission field, carrying out the Lord's work in Uganda, Kenya, and Israel; during his time abroad, Reverend Lyon was astounded to see the Lord bring 175 people to Himself; and

WHEREAS, in 1978, he embarked upon his second trip to the Holy Land, traveling with professors from Southern and Southwestern Seminaries and earning extension credit for the trip; and

WHEREAS, also during his time with Trinity Baptist Church, he served the Strawberry Baptist Association as the Sunday School Director, Chairman of the Evangelism Committee, and by heading up the Children's Department Work in Vacation Bible School; he gave of his time and many talents as a member of the Nominating Committee and as Vice President of the Pastor's Conference; and

WHEREAS, following his calling as a pastor, he and his family next moved to Knoxville, where Reverend Lyon served as a pastor at Euclid Avenue Baptist Church from 1974 until 1980; and

WHEREAS, during his fruitful six-year tenure at Euclid Avenue Baptist, Reverend Lyon saw 260 people devote their lives to Christ, developed plans for the construction of a Family Ministry Building, ran three buses as part of a ministry for impoverished children, and averaged 275 people attending Sunday school; within the Knox County Association, he served on the Constitution/By-Laws Committee, the Camp Ba-Yo-Ca Committee, and stood as Vice President of the Pastor's Conference; and

WHEREAS, in 1980 he was led to another church and assumed a pastorate at Calvary Baptist Church in Oak Ridge, where he served until 1986; and

WHEREAS, during Reverend Lyon's ministry at Calvary Baptist, the church baptized 182 people and added 158 new members; in addition, the church had the largest enrollment and average attendance at Vacation Bible School and the highest average attendance in Church Training of the entire Clinton Baptist Association; and

WHEREAS, as the Lord continued to bless Reverend Lyon's ministry, Calvary Baptist was able to remodel its building and maintain its Cooperative Program at fourteen percent and its Association Missions at three percent; and

WHEREAS, also during his tenure at Calvary Baptist, Reverend Lyon developed one of the most active disaster relief teams in the Southern Baptist Convention, participated in annual tent revivals, chaired the State Brotherhood Commission's Committee on Tents, and worked with Exceptional Citizens, enrolling fifty children in Vacation Bible School and serving as Camp Pastor at the organization's summer camp in May of 1987; and

WHEREAS, always aware of the needs of others, Reverend Lyon opened a trust fund for the daughter of one of the deacons at Calvary Baptist; under Gale Lyon's wise supervision, the fund grew to \$270,000, enough to fund a successful liver transplant for the girl and cover the high cost of subsequent care; Reverend Lyon continues to serve as Chairman of the Trustees of this fund; and

WHEREAS, within the Clinton Baptist Association that includes Calvary Baptist, Reverend Lyon served as a Moderator from 1982 until 1983, a member of the Christian Education, Building Survey, Constitution, and Finance committees, and as Chairman of Evangelism for three years; he was also privileged to preach at the Associational Youth Night; and

WHEREAS, from Calvary Baptist Church in Oak Hill, he moved his ministry to Calvary Baptist Church in Heiskell, where he served from 1986 until 1991; and

WHEREAS, highly experienced in evangelism and in inspiring congregations, he led the members of Calvary Baptist in holding the "Good News America" Revivals in Michigan; God blessed their congregation with forty-three additions and twenty-three baptisms; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Lyon oversaw a bus ministry for impoverished children in local mobile home parks and to make sure that the children's needs were met through Sunday school, Vacation Bible School, Bible studies, and choir; his congregation also provided clothing, food, counseling, shelter, and tutoring for children in desperate need; and

WHEREAS, during Gale Lyon's six years at Calvary Baptist in Heiskell, the church had twenty-nine baptisms and added six members and a Special Friends Sunday school class for people with special needs; and

WHEREAS, his extensive and abundant ministry experience aside, Reverend Lyon is a highly valued member of the secular community, always giving his time to worthy causes, including Central Virginia's Drug Abuse Council, the Bedford County Highway Safety Commission, and standing as Honorary Chairman of the Knox County Juvenile Court; and

WHEREAS, for his incredible service to his community and for his tireless efforts to make the world a better place for his fellow man, he has been the recipient of many prestigious awards and honors throughout the years; and

WHEREAS, in 1972, he was nominated as Outstanding Young Man of the Year for Bedford City, he received a Key Club Award in 1974, was listed in *Who's Who in Religion* in both 1976 and 1984, was honored by the Oak Ridge Police Department in 1986, and was named Honorary Deputy in Knox County in 1991; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Lyon has been giving generously of his time as a law enforcement chaplain for more than twenty-three years, first serving as a volunteer and later moving on to become a part-time employee with the Knox County Sheriff's Office; and

WHEREAS, alongside Knox County Sheriff Tim Hutchison, Gale Lyon founded the Chaplain Corps in 1999 and became its first Coordinator, taking on the responsibility of supervising thirteen volunteer chaplains; under his skilled leadership, the Corps has grown to thirty-five volunteers who are on-call twenty-four hours a day, all of whom graduated with a solid understanding of the mission they have been chosen to fulfill as a result of Chaplain Lyon's leadership and enthusiasm; and

WHEREAS, Gale Lyon says his passion for law enforcement chaplaincy may stem from the fact that his grandfather served as a Deputy Sheriff in Washington County and the fact that he has experienced first-hand the many pressures police officers face; and

WHEREAS, two of his sons, Bernie and Keith, have served courageously as officers with the Knox County Sheriff's Office; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Lyon deeply misses his youngest son, Assistant Chief Deputy L. Keith Lyon, who died in the line of duty on May 9, 2006, when he was in a fatal automobile accident while driving his department SUV; he had faithfully served with the Knox County Sheriff's Office for eighteen years; and

WHEREAS, drawing from his many years of experience as a Baptist pastor, Gale Lyon serves as an instructor for law enforcement training academy classes, leading classes on topics such as family issues and spiritual preparedness for officers; and

WHEREAS, he also assists with the planning, promotion, and endowment of the East Tennessee Law Enforcement Officers' Family Retreat, which provides family-oriented resources to officers and their spouses; and

WHEREAS, continually striving to help others, Reverend Lyon also worked to fund and distribute a police officer's Bible as a memorial for Steve McCulley, an officer who was killed in the line of duty; the Bibles have been given to every local officer, as well as to law enforcement officers in other locations, including those who nobly served at Ground Zero in New York City; and

WHEREAS, Gale Lyon devotes his life, his beliefs, and his many talents to ministering not only to the men and women of the Knox County Sheriff's Office, but also to jail inmates; in addition, he helps lead a twelve-week training academy for chaplains in Knox County and other East Tennessee law enforcement agencies; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable forty-six years as a humble servant of God, giving himself fully to whatever he undertakes, Reverend Lyon has demonstrated the utmost ability and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of his friends, his family, his community, the Knox County Sheriff's Office, and the many members of the congregations that have benefited from his outstanding leadership; and

WHEREAS, because of his giving spirit and his tireless work toward building a better community and a better world, Gale Lyon is undoubtedly deserving of the title of 2005 National Chaplain of the Year, and he should be specially recognized for this fitting honor and for his years of astute service to God and to the citizens of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and congratulate Reverend Lynn Gale Lyon upon his selection as 2005 National Chaplain of the Year, commend his many years of unwavering and meritorious service, thank him for his humble service and his devotion to God and to his country, and extend to him our most sincere wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.